

Ethanol distillery doesn't need zoning changes, variances

(continued from Page 1)

stack the large round bales five high using custom designed equipment. The rest of the site will be used for switchgrass test plots and to provide a buffer for neighbors.

The project cleared a big hurdle when Walnut Township officials agreed with state and federal officials that it should be considered an agricultural operation. That means Vanashree is exempt from zoning. Liberty Township is still considering the issue.

"That's a key issue with Vanashree," Prosperity explained. "We can't let the objections of a few people derail an important opportunity for the people of Ohio. This is a big deal. We're getting the first commercial scale switchgrass distillery in the world."

Siting the plant near Buckeye Lake isn't an accident. Jayna believes the distillery's "carbon footprint" can be near zero, thanks to Vanashree's new osmotic hydroxygenation process. Most of the facility's carbon dioxide will be produced during fermentation. Carbon dioxide will be contained in the fermentation vessels then cleaned or stripped. About 20 to 30 percent will be of sufficient purity to be sold to soft drink manufacturers. In a typical ethanol plant, the lower grade carbon dioxide, a harmless gas, would simply be vented to the atmosphere.

Vanashree is designing the plant for the future, Gupta said, so it wants to address possible limits on carbon dioxide emissions now. That's the rationale for its proprietary osmotic hydroxygenation process. Simply put, the excess carbon dioxide will be pumped in a high pressure pipeline to a diffusion system in Buckeye Lake. A network of pipes will be sunk in the lake to diffuse the carbon dioxide throughout the lake.

Vanashree scientists expect the combination of high pressure, size of the diffusion orifices, photovoltaic effects (sunlight) and the highly oxygenated lake water will convert the carbon dioxide into water and oxygen. In simple terms, the process strips off the carbon molecule, leaving two oxygen molecules.

Jayna is reluctant to provide more details, citing Vanashree's multi-million dollar investment in the technology and its hope to earn millions in royalties as the

process is licensed to carbon generators around the world. The shallow depth of Buckeye Lake is an important part of the process. It provides the required oxygen rich water environment, he explained.

Retired Millersport High chemistry teacher Tom Tweddle says the chemistry sounds about right. He added that while many carbon producers are considering injecting carbon dioxide into the earth, he believes Vanashree is the only one using a water diffusion process.

Jayna admitted to the *Beacon* that this will be the first full-scale test of the new technology. It's worked in some shallow plastic pools outside their Pune lab, he said. But there is little that can go wrong, Jayna insisted.

The worst case, he said, would simply carbonate the lake like a giant dark green Mountain Dew. "It might feel a little tingly at first to swimmers and water skiers, but that's about it," Jayna said. Lake water would effervesce when disturbed just like when a soft drink is poured into a cup.

Both Jayna and Gupta claim the "slim possibility" of turning the lake into a giant murky Dew wouldn't affect aquatic life. But ODNR biologist Dr. Nomar Fishen isn't so sure. He's concerned that the tingly water might stimulate the often lethargic *Cyprinus carpio* (carp) to breed more often, upsetting the delicate balance between carp and more sporting fish like bass, saugeye and crappie. "If the *Cyprinus carpio* start breeding like rabbits on Viagra, we've got a real problem," Fishen said.

One lake area entrepreneur is ready to turn the possible sparkling water into profits. Darlene Murphy plans to open a lakeshore spa at the Crow's Nest B & B in Millersport. She's already picked a name - "Tingling Waters." She hopes to attract hundreds of visitors for a rejuvenating "spritz" in the lake.

But not everyone is ready to sign on to biomass energy, zero carbon footprints and tingling water. "Let's not forget that we're gonna have an ethanol refinery in our backyards," said Nona Curry. "It might be called a distillery, but it looks like a refinery and probably smells like one too."

She's inviting residents to an April 1 meeting at Millersport Junior High School. "We've got to stop this switchgrass now before it spreads," she said.

Growth could hold down future sewer rate hikes

(continued from Page 3)

for 2011 and \$40 for 2012.

The customer group believes some of his projections are too conservative, particularly the projection that the delinquency rate will increase from the 6.16 percent average over the past five years to 10 percent. Overdue bills are ultimately added to the property owner's property tax bill. The group believes the projected payment of delinquent bills is also too conservative.

Fuller wants to be conservative until a couple of years of data is collected under the new rate. "I have to err on the conservative side," he told commissioners Thursday. "We are in an evaluation phase."

Fuller believes the reductions in the annual increases for benefits/salaries and contracted services sought by the customers - from 9 to 6 percent and 4 to 3 respectively are too optimistic. However,

the lower increases are incorporated in his projections.

Both Fuller and the customers group agreed to project only modest growth in EDU's - just 26 a year. More growth could postpone operating rate increases for months or years or offset unexpected cost increases elsewhere. Collections above the 90 percent projections and/or earlier payments of delinquent bills could have the same effect.

The customers group made a final pitch Thursday asking commissioners to include in the rate resolution their intent to establish a formal users group to advise the director and commissioners on district rates and policies. Bubb thought it unnecessary to include the language in the rate resolution. He said the events of the past two months demonstrated their willingness to listen to customers and evaluate options.



The BUCKEYE LAKE Beacon

SERVING ALL THE COMMUNITIES OF THE BUCKEYE LAKE REGION

Editor/Publisher Charles Prince
Features Editor Kim Garee
Writer Scott Rawdon
Advertising Manager Charles Prince
Graphic Designer Kendra Kohler
Business Manager Mary Prince
Office Manager Sondra Jones

More Than 14,500 copies distributed in the Buckeye Lake area.

• Free in distribution area •
Mail \$29/year; Students (Sept.-May) \$22/year
Snowbirds (Nov.-April) \$15/year

News Deadline-Friday 4:00pm
P.O. Box 1542 • 4675 Walnut Rd. • Buckeye Lake, OH 43008
(740) 928-5541 • Fax (740) 928-7960
www.buckeyelakebeacon.com

Published by Impact Publications
 Copyright © 2007 Buckeye Lake Beacon

Village discusses water, sewer deals with county

(continued from Page 2)

than 110,000 gallons of sewage per day. If it does, the county would pay a penalty of 500 percent for every 10 percent increment of sewage the village receives beyond 110,000 gallons.

March 21, Thornville submitted an updated proposal that eliminated the charge of \$10 per 1,000 gallons.

According to the proposed water contract, the county would pay \$2.75 per 1,000 gallons of treated water with a guaranteed daily minimum billed usage of 125,000 gallons. Last summer, the commissioners proposed a rate of \$2.30 per 1,000 gallons.

Monday night, Perry County Commissioner Thad Cooperrider updated council members and residents on the status of the proposal to provide sewer service to the south bank and the Thornville proposal to provide fresh water to Northern Perry County.

"The (fresh) water was not doable for us, but it was close," said Cooperrider. "We should be able to work it out." However, the sewer proposal "wasn't even close to what we could afford," he said. "It doesn't meet the needs of the county, but it's still worth looking at again."

Cooperrider said the county really needs 200,000 per day of sewage treatment capacity, but Thornville's proposal limits the county to 110,000 gallons. "We need to find a way to have 200,000," he said. "If not, we won't be able to take the contract." Cooperrider said Thornville's sewer plant has a capacity of 400,000 gallons per day, but is currently operating at 130,000 gallons per day. "Much of that is I and I (inflow and infiltration, mainly stormwater runoff)," he said. Cooperrider added that if all the inflow and infiltration were removed from Thornville's plant, it would be operating at 15 percent of its capacity, which may be too little for the plant even to function properly.

Cooperrider said the county could spend \$1.8 million to \$2 million to update the county's existing Crown Wehrle sewage treatment plant to "ultra modern" standards. With the update, he believes the Crown Wehrle plant could handle 200,000

gallons per day. "We'll still come to Thornville, even if it's more expensive," he said. "It's good for Thornville."

Council President Beth Patrick asked if the county had a counter proposal ready.

"No, we don't," replied Cooperrider, explaining he only read the most recent proposed contract Friday.

Resident Terry Anderson asked why the negotiations are being "portrayed in public." He believes the village's negotiating team and county representatives should hold much of the negotiation in private. "This has gone on too long, Thad," he said.

"It's public money; it affects everyone in the room," Cooperrider replied. "I don't want to do this behind closed doors."

Resident Willis McNabb said he believes Cooperrider only replies to proposals in the newspapers or public meetings. "You don't want to put your proposals in writing," he said.

Cooperrider said that last September the commissioners clearly spelled out a proposed contract to Thornville, which was given to the village and reviewed publicly. He reiterated that the county needs more capacity than what Thornville is offering and hoped that a compromise could be reached that evening. He said that Thornville meetings often result in "lots of finger pointing," but he assured the county would deliver a counter proposal in writing.

Former Thornville Mayor Terry Lynn asked why 200,000 gallons of capacity is needed.

Commissioner Lonnie Wood said Tuesday that 110,000 gallons will serve the existing homes and the open lots along Honey Creek Road. But, Wood said the commissioners want the extra capacity for future growth in order to make the system more affordable to the customers and the county. The more homes that are on the system, the cheaper everyone's rates.

Monday night, council member Ron Dittoe said without a recent written proposal from the county, the village has worked under the assumption the county

(continued on Page 5)